

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IMPORTATION / EXPORTATION OF CATS & DOGS TO COSTA RICA:

TO BRING YOUR DOG OR CAT INTO COSTA RICA FROM THE UNITED STATES:

1. The dog or cat must be accompanied by a Health Certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian, and endorsed by a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS) veterinarian. That endorsement needs to be done by the APHIS Veterinary Services Area Office in your home state. Contact information for that office can be found on the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) (<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/home/>) then clicking on, "Travel with my pet", on the right side (<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/pet-travel/>) .

2. Veterinary Certificate Requirements:

2.1 It must be issued by the Official Veterinary Services or by the Competent Authority of the country of origin. It is recommended to use an International Certificate (APHIS FORM 7001) for Small Animals.

2.2 Certificates must be consecutively numbered; each page must be signed and stamped with the official stamp.

2.3 The Certificate must indicate if there are any annexes and their respective numbers, each of them duly signed and stamped by the Competent Authority.

2.4 The International Veterinary Certificate must be in Spanish language; otherwise, it must be accompanied by an original official translation to Spanish certified by the Competent Authority.

2.5 The health certificate should be made out in duplicate.

2.6. The health certificate does NOT need to be signed by a Notary Public, nor does it need to be stamped by the Costa Rican Consular office.

2.7 Animals exported in commercial lot numbers must be accompanied by an Import Permit. Personal pets (dogs or cats) do NOT need an Import Permit.

2.8. The official rabies vaccination certificate must accompany the health documents and is valid for the period of the vaccine (1 or 3 years).

2.9. The dog/cat and supporting documentation will be inspected/reviewed upon arrival to Costa Rica.

3. Information to be included in the International Veterinary Certificate:

3.1 Pet's information: breed, sex, color, age and pet's identification (if available).

3.2 Name and address of the exporter.

3.3. Name and address of the consignee.

3.4 Means of transport.

3.5 Name and signature of the Official Veterinary Doctor, stamp of the Competent Authority and date of issue.

4. Vaccination requirements: The International Veterinary Certificate shall contain the following statement which certifies that the entire consignment meets the requirements established:

4.1 The dog/cat was examined and found to be healthy and free of any clinical signs of infectious disease. This examination must be performed at least 2 weeks prior to the departure date.

4.2 The animal was treated within the fifteen (15) days prior to exportation with approved products for endo and ectoparasites, ensuring that animals are free of ticks and other external and internal parasites. This shall include date of treatment, brand name, lot number, and the active ingredient of the product.

4.3 Dogs were vaccinated against distemper, hepatitis, parvovirus and leptospirosis.

4.4 Cats were vaccinated against feline viral rhinotracheitis, calicivirus and panleukopenia.

4.5 Dogs and cats over 3 months of age must be vaccinated against rabies, this vaccine must be valid the day of its entry into the country. The following information must be included on the health certificate: date of vaccination, brand name of vaccine, manufacturer, lot number and expiration date (period of validity of the vaccine).

4.6 Puppies younger (dogs and/or cats) than three months should not be vaccinated against rabies; however, the vaccination plan must be certified according to age and species.

There are two (2) ways for personally-owned pets (dogs and cats) to enter Costa Rica:

1) Pets that enter with the owner either in-cabin or as “baggage” on the same flight and enter on the baggage claim area: these pets require the above documentation. Depending upon the length of stay in Costa Rica, pets entering Costa Rica from the U.S. may or may not need additional documentation in order to leave Costa Rica and return to the U.S.: a) If the pet enters Costa Rica and stays longer than the validity of the U.S. Health Certificate (30 days for APHIS Form 7001) or rabies certificate, then that pet will need a valid Costa Rican Health Certificate or rabies certificate in order to leave. b) If the pet leaves during the time period of the validity of the U.S. Health Certificate and rabies certificate, then that is all that is required to leave Costa Rica.

2) Dogs and cats that enter Costa Rica for commercial reasons, or, are shipped as cargo, or the owner has two or more large breed dogs, then in these cases the animals will be directed directly to a Customs “warehouse”, and will need all of the documentation found above as well as requiring an Import Permit (Sanitary Health Permit) from the Animal Quarantine Offices (SENASA-Departamento de Cuarentena Animal - SEE BELOW) as well as needing to satisfy the required Customs procedures (all this is done using a Customs Broker). NOTE: The animals are well cared for in the Customs “warehouse”. The Import Permit costs approximately \$20.

3) It is important to contact the airline in advance for additional requirements.

TO TAKE YOUR DOG OR CAT FROM COSTA RICA BACK TO THE UNITED STATES (if the original Health Certificate or Rabies Vaccination Certificate FROM the U.S. has expired or if origin is Costa Rica):

You will need a Certificate of Good Health from your veterinarian in Costa Rica AND an export authorization issued by the Costa Rican Ministry of Agriculture (SENASA-Departamento de Cuarentena Animal). It is advisable that your Costa Rican veterinarian take care of all required authorizations with the Ministry of Agriculture (SENASA- Cuarentena Animal) located in Barrial de Heredia, Jardines del Recuerdo, 2 Km West, 400 Meters South, Heredia. Telephone number: 2260-8300 Ext. 2024 or 2093 or 2260-9046.

Disclaimer: The National Service of Animal Health (SENASA) of Costa Rica makes an effort to keep these requirements updated but they may be subject to modifications without notice in the event of a change in the health status of the exporting country. The Government of Costa Rica will not be held liable for any loss resulting from changes in the requirements.

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